

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Rejection of the Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the office action dated 7/17/01, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 4 - 7, and 12 - 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103. The Examiner contends that the claimed invention is unpatentable over by U.S. Patent 5,892,909 issued to Grasso, et al. (hereinafter referred to as the Grasso reference) in view of U.S. Patent 6,182,059 issued to Angotti, et al. (hereinafter referred to as the Angotti reference). The Applicants respectfully traverse.

The Grasso reference discloses an intranet-based system with methods for co-active deliver of information to multiple users. The system of the Grasso reference implements an 'Adaptive Distribution' methodology so that, as organizational changes occur, the system ensures that the most current, relevant information is always made available to appropriate eligible subscribers; no additional effort is required from either the subscribers or the distributors. Subscriber lists of a distribution automatically respond to changes in group composition, accommodating new or departing individuals within the organization, as well as accommodating changing organizational roles.

The Angotti reference discloses an automatic electronic message interpretation and routing system. In the system of the Angotti reference, as described

with reference to **Figures 2A and 2B**, each incoming message is analyzed in order to create a response to the source of the incoming message. The final step of the method in the Angotti reference is to "TRANSMIT RESPONSE TO SOURCE" as set forth in step 124 of **Figure 2B**.

In the system claimed in independent claims 1 and 4 (and the associated dependent claims) of the present invention, the system processes each incoming message by "categorizing said message by selecting a first category entry from a category database." The Examiner contends that the Grasso reference contains such a teaching.

The Applicants respectfully traverse. Column 4, lines 7 to 37 state:

The Internet and the World Wide Web today are best suited for static information and as an archive for dynamic information. Business critical, dynamic information must be targeted to the right people for immediate impact. This is performed today, even in the most highly technologically advanced companies, by combinations of electronic interpersonal mail, fax blasters, Federal Express packages, and hastily dispatched voice mails. In most companies, all of these methods are used in order to try to guarantee business critical information reaches the right parties at the right time. Unfortunately, such an approach is a significant burden which relies on mostly manual ad hoc practices to "get the word out." Specifically, the approach produces information overload for the recipients and causes the most critical information to be often overlooked. It is this business-critical target information flow that the Internet can provide a solution for. This is not addressed with present-day Internet tools and applications. What is needed are system and methods which provide for management and delivery of time-sensitive, business-critical information to multiple individuals located at various locations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An Intranet-based system with methods for co-active information delivery is described. The system allows users to manage the distribution and delivery of information across an enterprise Intranet, the Internet, and common communication channels (e.g., printers, fax, pager and e-mail). The system provides a wizard-like user interface which intuitively walks users through various tasks, including distribution of new documents,

updating of existing documents, modifying profiles of documents, groups, roles and individuals.

This text contains neither reference to a category database nor any reference to categorizing messages.

Column 7, lines 40 to 54 state:

Electronic mail is used today primarily for interpersonal communication. It provides an active "push" model, in that the sender of a message determines who should receive its content and "pushes" the message immediately into the electronic in-box of the recipient. In effect, the sender makes all of the decisions about who will receive the message and when. Web servers and Web browsers, on the other hand, provide a passive "pull" model. Content is placed within a Web server in anticipation of users later browsing the Web site to look for relevant content. The anticipated recipient decides whether and when to visit the Web site looking for new or recently updated content. Both "push" and "pull" Internet methods provide forms of information access and retrieval.

This text contains neither reference to a category database nor any reference to categorizing messages.

Column 8, line 33 to column 9, line 25 state:

B. Business-critical Information Delivery

For business critical information, it is highly desirable that the information be targeted to ensure that those that need it will see it in a timely and practical manner. Fundamental to a company's productivity and bottom-line is the value of business-critical information--information that receives the right attention in a timely manner. For instance, the value to a company of getting the latest positive review of a product into the hands of its sales representatives might be critical to the success of that company. Targeting the people who truly have a business critical need for the information benefits both the information distributor as well as the recipients. For information that is not timely and business-critical, on the other hand, it is reasonable to place the information on a centrally-available, publicized Web server. There, those that wish to look can look, at their leisure.

Most Web servers today are being used for information that is broadly available in an unrestricted fashion and is business useful, but not business critical and urgent. Unfortunately e-mail, fax, and Federal Express are being used today for business critical, timely, information distribution-- "unfortunately" in this case because it leads to widespread information overload and a loss of business productivity and effectiveness.

There is no single answer for what information is timely and business critical to whom. A new update on a human resource hiring policy within a company may be business critical and urgent to active hiring managers and of only occasional interest to everyone else. Best-customer pricing changes may be critically interesting to those customers, but irrelevant or damaging to be seen or received by others. Criticality and urgency of information is, therefore, a shared responsibility. The distributor of the information has some constraints and knowledge of groups and individuals for whom the information may be (or, perhaps, should be) critical. Individual recipients, then, must make their own decision as to how critical the information truly is to them. In effect, "business critical" is negotiated on an individual basis. Factors to consider include the exact type of information, the directives known by the information distributor, and the current attention and focus on the target of the intended target audience.

C. Negotiation to Target Information

Together, the information distributor and each intended recipient must negotiate whether to have each kind of report or document pushed by the distributor to the recipient, or posted to a reference site for the recipient to later decide to pull, or have recipients proactively notified of new or updated information. Both parties participate in cotargeting the level of business critical need for the information.

1. Eligible Groups, Roles and Individuals

The information distributor first decides which groups (e.g., Tier 1 Channel Partners or Eastern Regional Sales Representatives), organizational roles (such as VP Sales), and which specific individuals (e.g., Mary Jones) are allowed access to the information. These are the people for whom the distributor is targeting the information. It is within this targeted community that individuals can participate in the decision of whether to actually receive the information on an ongoing basis.

This text contains neither reference to a category database nor any reference to categorizing messages.

Finally, column 14, lines 10 to 27 state:

4. Open Data Repository

The above-described profiles are stored in a Data Repository. In a preferred embodiment, the system use standard ODBC (Microsoft Open Database Connectivity) for storing the profile information in relational table, thereby providing an "open" Data Repository, with performance, portable, and database independence. Any ODBC data source, including Oracle, Sybase, Microsoft SQL Server, and Informix database server products, may host the underlying Data Repository in a manner which is transparent to the system. In this manner, one's corporate standard database server and customer standards/policies for database administration and backup may be applied. The Data Repository itself comprises two ODBC-compliant databases: an Address Database (ADB) and a Distribution Database (DDB). The former handles all addressing, policy and profile information; the latter handles distributions and releases. Together, the database provide storage persistency and data access.

This text contains neither reference to a category database nor any reference to categorizing messages. This text does discuss a database, however, the database is used to store a set of "Distributor profiles" and "Subscriber Profiles" as set forth in column 13, line 27 to column 14, line 9.

After categorizing an incoming message, the system of the present invention creates "a response message using said first category entry" wherein the response message includes "a set of message recipients defined in said first category entry." Thus, the present invention introduces a system wherein different incoming messages may generate response messages that will be sent to different parties.

The Grasso reference does teach the creation of a “response message using said first category entry” wherein the response message includes “a set of message recipients defined in said first category entry.” As previously set forth, there is no category database or any categorization of an incoming message. The Grasso reference does teach a set of “roles” that can be distributed, however these roles are not the same as selecting a category for a message and then creating a response message based upon the selected category.

The system of the Angotti reference also does not teach a system that categorizes incoming messages and then uses that categorization to determine which the recipients of a generated response message. The system of the Angotti reference merely sends a response back to the source of the incoming message.


Since neither the Grasso reference nor the Angotti reference teach nor teach toward a system that uses a category database to categorize incoming messages and then uses the categorization to determine the recipients of a proposed response message, independent claims 1 and 4 are allowable over the Grasso reference and the Angotti reference. Similarly, the remaining dependent claims that incorporate all the limitations of either claim 1 or 4, are likewise allowable over the Grasso reference and the Angotti reference.

The Applicant respectfully submits that the above-amendments place the continuing patent application in condition for allowance. The Applicant respectfully requests examination of the continuing patent application at the earliest possible date.

Respectfully submitted,

STATTLER, JOHANSEN & ADELI LLP

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Dag Johansen
Reg. No. 36,172

Stattler, Johansen & Adeli LLP
P.O. Box 51860
Palo Alto, CA 94303-0728
Phone: (650) 752-0990 x101
Fax: (650) 752-0995

The Amended Claims

The following pages provide the amended claims with the amendments marked with deleted material in [brackets] and new material underlined.

1 1. (Amended) A computer implemented method for processing electronic
2 messages, said method comprising:
3 receiving a message in an enterprise mail system, said message from a human
4 message sender;
5 categorizing said message by selecting a first category entry from a category
6 database comprising a plurality of category entries, each said category entry
7 containing information for handling particular incoming messages; and
8 creating a response message using said information from said first category entry,
9 said response message including a response body defined in said first category
10 entry and a set of message recipients defined in said first category entry.

 4. (Amended) A computer implemented method for processing electronic
messages, said method comprising:
 receiving a first message into an enterprise mail system, said first message from a
 first human message sender;
 storing said first message in a message database;

assigning a category entry from a category database to said first message, said category entry containing information for handling particular incoming messages;

delivering said first message to a first enterprise mail system user; and

providing a template response message to said first enterprise mail system user using information in said category entry, said template response message including a set of message recipients defined in said category entry.